

Documents on Diplomacy: The Source

The Proposed Ship Canal Connecting the Atlantic and Pacific *The United States Democratic Review, Vol. 6, Number 22, October 1839*

Students of history often date American interest in a "Panama" canal to the second half of the 19th century. This article, written in 1839, informs Americans about the proposed canal's even earlier history. American efforts to obtain the rights to a canal route also come in for scrutiny and highlight difficulties for U.S. diplomatic representatives on the ground—How much support should the American Government give the business ventures of private citizens?

Submitted by a citizen of New York, formerly United States Consul at Lima, and for the ports of Peru. Georgetown, D. C. 1836.

A single glance at the map of the world will suffice to satisfy even the most unreflecting observer, that the execution of this long contemplated project, of connecting the two great oceans by a ship canal across the Isthmus that divides the two Americas, would be (in the words of the *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1809, page 282) "the mightiest event in favor of the peaceful intercourse of nations which the physical circumstances of the globe present to the enterprise of man."

It would effect a revolution in the commercial system of the world, surpassing that of the discovery of the passage by sea to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope. To the vast commerce of the United States and Europe with the western coast of South America, it would save the circumnavigation of the latter continent, the total distance of which is about twelve thousand miles, together with the difficulties and dangers of the navigation of Cape Horn. The immense Pacific territory of the United States, now all but inaccessible to the commerce of our Atlantic board, except by overland conveyance, would be brought within easy access to the latter.

The commerce of the world with China, Japan, and the Indian Archipelago, would be facilitated by a saving of above four thousand miles in distance; together with a still greater advantage in safety and ease, from the route avoiding both the equatorial and the high latitudes of the present route, and passing through the most favorable latitudes for winds and currents each way. Similar advantages would be afforded to the whale, skin, and fur fisheries of the different nations and especially the United States, in the Pacific. Incalculable as would be these advantages in the present state of the commerce of the world, their benefit would be multiplied by the effect which such increased facilities of communication and

exchange would exert, to stimulate the immense masses of the human race thus acted upon to new efforts of industry, in the development of the resource of the richest portions of the globe, which would vastly increase the amount of valuable production, and the activity of commercial interchange, above the present degree of either.

And, finally, the moral influence upon all that section of the globe, of bringing it into such close and intimate communication with the civilization and institutions of the more favored countries of the North Atlantic, will constitute a motive not inferior, to the eye of the philanthropist, to the aggregate of all the material advantages enumerated above. If the realization of such a project be within the limits of physical possibility, we are well assured that no reader will hesitate to pronounce it an object well worthy of the combined exertions and resources, if necessary, of all the principal commercial nations of the world.

This is a subject upon which, though it has been occasionally slightly noticed in the public prints, very little is popularly known in the United States. We propose, therefore, in the present Article, to present as clear and succinct a view as possible of its history and merits; for which we find ample materials . . .

FIVE OPTIONS FOR A CANAL

[German explorer Alexander von] Humboldt, in his *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, Book 1, ch. 2, enumerates not less than five routes probably possible, for the communication between the two oceans, by the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea.

- The first is comprised within the limits of Mexico, being across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, in the (now) State of Oaxaca. The Bay of Tehuantepec, on the Pacific, and the Bay of Campeachy, in the Gulf of Mexico, here approach to within about a hundred and twenty-five miles of each other, by a line inclining slightly to the eastward of due north. . . .

- The second is the route by Lake Nicaragua and the river San Juan, in the States of Nicaragua and Costa Rica, in the (now) Federal Republic of Central America. The canaling requisite on this route would be only over a distance of about seventeen miles between the Gulf of Papagayo, on the Pacific, and lake Nicaragua. . .

● The third is across the Isthmus of Panama, within the dominions of the (now) Republic of New Granada, by the river Chagres, which empties into the Caribbean Sea. This being the narrowest part of the Isthmus that connects the two continents, (or very nearly so,) is the route to which the attention most naturally first directs itself. The shortest distance across, in a straight line, is less than thirty miles. . . .

● The fourth is by the river Atrato, emptying into the Gulf of Darien (by which name we sometimes hear it called), by its tributary, the river Napipi, which is navigable, though not for vessels of large burden, to within about sixteen or eighteen miles of the small bay of Cupica, on the Pacific.

● The fifth is by the same river, the Atrato, by a small branch emptying into it higher up. . . called the Quito. . .

[I]t will not be an uninteresting fact in the future history of this subject, [that] a canal communication between the two oceans has already been made. A monk of great activity, says Humboldt, curé of the village of Novita, employed his parishioners to dig a small canal in the ravine De la Raspadura, by means of which, when the rains are abundant, canoes loaded with cocoa pass from sea to sea. This interior communication has existed since 1788. The small canal of Raspadura unites, on the coasts of the two oceans, two points seventy-five leagues distant from one another.

“ENTIRELY UNSUITABLE” ROUTES

The two last mentioned, which are scarcely, perhaps, to be properly spoken of as separate routes, both consisting mainly of the river Atrato, are . . . entirely unsuitable to the project of a ship canal; and much inferior to the other routes for any sort of communication, by reason of the great distance between the two oceans, the want of depth in both rivers, and want of good harbors at both ends. They lie entirely within the Continent of South America, in the province of Choco. Similar objections, so far, at least, as regards the project of a ship canal, apply to the first-named route, that of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. And, in fact, there can be no doubt, that it is between the two remaining routes—the Guatemalian by Lake Nicaragua, and the New Granadian by the river Chagres—that the alternatives of selection alone lie.

Several abortive efforts have been set on foot, at different times, to realize this long cherished dream of magnificent enterprise. These appear to have proceeded, for the most part, either from mere irresponsible and scheming adventurers, attracted by the obvious advantages and comparative facilities of the undertaking, or from parties destitute of the proper degree of energy, fixedness of purpose, and power of combination, to bring together the vast accumulation of resources on which alone so gigantic an enterprise can be founded. In some instances, too, an unfortunate fatality has intervened to frustrate plans apparently begun under

happier auspices, and with fair prospects of success. We propose, in the present paper, to present a general historical outline of these successive attempts, as necessary to the complete view of the subject we are desirous of exhibiting, and as preparatory to such future action, either national or on a large scale of private combination, as we hope to see hereafter grow out of its present agitation and discussion

SPANISH SECRECY

During the ascendancy of the Spanish dominion in these countries, little or nothing was done, or was to have been expected, towards the accomplishment of an object demanding a bold and large grasp of enterprise, and an enlightened liberality of views, political and commercial, entirely foreign to the ideas and habits of the narrow, restrictive, and exclusive system, which weighed like a paralyzing incubus upon the native energies, both of the mother country and of the magnificent colonial empire bequeathed to her by the genius of Columbus; although its future execution, at some period or other, has always been contemplated, and looked forward to with a profound interest by many enlightened minds, as a necessary result of the form and position of this continent. Even in the earlier part of the sixteenth century, projects began to be discussed for the intersection of the Isthmus. We are not, however, aware of any surveys made with such a view by the Spanish Government, till the year 1781, to which allusion is made in the following extracts of letters from Jefferson, when Minister at Paris, to Mr. William Carmichael, at Madrid:

PARIS, December 11, 1787. I have been told that cutting through the Isthmus of Panama, which the world has so often wished and supposed practicable, has at times been thought of by the Government of Spain, and that they once proceeded so far as to have a survey and examination made of the ground; but that the result was either impracticability or too great difficulty.

PARIS, May 27, 1788. With respect to the Isthmus of Panama, I am assured by Burgoin, (who would not choose to be named, however,) that a survey was made; that a canal was practicable; and that the idea was suppressed for political reasons altogether. He has seen and minutely examined the report. This report is to me a vast desideratum, for reasons political and philosophical.

. . . It is well known that the Spanish Government looked with an eye of most suspicious jealousy upon this the most interesting spot, from its remarkable natural capabilities, on the face of the globe. Well understanding that this was the weakest side, and as it were the key, of its American possessions, it trembled that the idea should go abroad, among the other powerful and commercial nations of the world, whose attention and interest would then be strongly attracted towards the Isthmus, of the possibility of a ship communication between the two oceans at this point; and it directed, therefore, unremitted efforts to the object of preserving it entirely isolated from and unknown to Europe.

For this purpose it neglected the conquest of the Indians along the northern coast of the Isthmus, leaving it uninhabited and difficult of access, and planting all its population on its Pacific side. And we are told . . . that it was the instruction of the King of Spain to the Governor of St. John's Castle, not to permit any British subject to pass up or down the lake; for if ever the English came to a knowledge of its importance and value, they would soon make themselves masters of this part of the country.

The narrow-minded stupidity of such a policy is, however, sufficiently apparent from the following remarks in which Humboldt, writing in 1808, and dedicating his work to Charles IV [Emperor of Spain], attempts to impress upon the Spanish Government more enlarged and liberal views in relation to this portion of its dominions:

Moreover, no political consideration should oppose the progress of population, agriculture, commerce, and civilization, in the Isthmus of Panama. The more this neck of land shall be cultivated, the more resistance will it oppose to the enemies of the Spanish Government. The events which took place at Buenos Aires prove the advantages of a concentrated population in the case of an invasion. If any enterprising nation wished to become possessed of the isthmus, it could do so with the greatest ease at present, when good and numerous fortifications are destitute of arms to defend them. The unhealthiness of the climate, though now much diminished at Portobello, would alone oppose great obstacles to any military undertaking in the isthmus. It is from St. Charles de Chiloe, and not from Panama, that Peru can be attacked. It requires from three to five months to ascend from Panama to Lima. But the whale and *cachalot* fishery, which in 1803 drew sixty English vessels to the South Sea, and the facilities for the Chinese commerce and the furs of Nootka Sound, are baits of a very seductive nature. They will draw, sooner or later, the masters of the ocean to a point of the globe destined by nature to change the face of the commercial system of nations. . . .

Though the justice of the compliment with which he seeks to recommend his advice may well be questioned:

The time is past when Spain, through a jealous policy, refused to other nations a thoroughfare through the possessions of which she has so long kept the world in ignorance. Those who are at present at the head of the government, are enlightened enough to give a favorable reception to the liberal ideas proposed to them; and the presence of a stranger is no longer regarded as a danger for the country.

NEW REPUBLICS, NEW INTEREST

But a new era in the history of this portion of the Western Hemisphere was marked by the events which, in the provinces, succeeded the proclamation of the Constitution of 1812, at Cadiz, in 1820. It was speedily followed by the complete overthrow and expulsion of the Spanish authority throughout the American Colonies, after a struggle more or less protracted in the different portions of the country. . . .

On the achievement of their independence, one of the earliest great objects of national interest to which the attention of the new republican governments was directed was naturally the execution of this long deferred project of the union of the Atlantic and Pacific waters. The Government of Central America, being earlier composed to a state of comparative order and tranquility, was considerably in advance of its southern rival for the possession of this splendid honor and advantage, in the initiatory steps which it took towards inviting that cooperation of foreign capital which alone, in the exhausted and feeble condition of the country itself, could afford a prospect of the accomplishment of so vast an undertaking. . . .

As early as the eighteenth of September, 1824, the newly established Government of Central America received proposals from an English company, through the house of Barclay and Co.; and, on the second of February ensuing [1825], from an association composed chiefly of merchants in the United States, signed by Colonel Charles Bourke and Mr. Matthew Llanos, who even went so far as to state that they had brought an armed brig, with engineers to level the grounds and survey the lake Nicaragua and the river San Juan, the route by which they projected the establishment of a steam communication between the two oceans, provided the Government should grant them the exclusive privileges they solicited

Without acting specifically on either of these offers, the Government passed a decree, on the twelfth of July, 1825, for the purpose of inviting a competition of proposals, promising the sanction and assistance of the State to any parties who would undertake the project, and to recognize as a public debt the money expended in the execution of it; the revenues of the work to be applied to the payment of the interest and principal of the capital embarked, deducting the expenses of repairs, management, and defense, and the navigation being free to all friendly and neutral nations, without any privilege or exclusion.

In the meantime the attention of the Government of the United State to this subject had been urgently invoked by the first diplomatic representative from the newly constituted Republic, Mr. de Canaz.; who, under the instructions of his Government, in a note to the Secretary of State, dated Washington, February 8th, 1825, thus writes:

I ought to mention, sir, as the representative of the Government of the Centre that nothing would be more grateful to it than that this co-operation should be owing to your generous nation, whose noble conduct has been a model and a protection to all the Americas; and that, on these considerations, it will be highly satisfactory to have it a participator; not only of the merit of the enterprise, but of the great advantages which that canal of communication must produce, by mean of a treaty, which may perpetually secure the possession of it to the two nations. By the data which at present exist, there ought to be no doubt

By the data which at present exists, there ought to be no doubt of the possibility of the work in the terms shown by the plan which I have the honor of sending you herewith. My Government is disposed to employ all the means in its power to facilitate the execution; a company of respectable American merchants is ready to undertake the work as soon as it is secured by a treaty between both Governments; and finally, if a diplomatic agent be appointed by this Government to the Republic of the Centre, and if he be instructed upon the matter, the most favorable opportunity presents itself for the arrangement of this business."

To which Mr. Clay, April 18th, 1825, thus replies:

The idea has been long conceived of uniting those two seas by a canal navigation. The execution of it will form a great epoch in the commercial affairs of the whole world. The practicability of it can be scarcely doubted. Various lines for the proposed canal have been suggested, and have divided public opinion. The evidence, tending to show the superiority of the advantages of that which would traverse the province of Nicaragua, seems to have nearly settled the question in favor of that route. Still, on a project of such vast magnitude, it is necessary to proceed with the greatest caution. A false step, taken in the first movement, might lead to the most mischievous consequences. The President, has, therefore, determined to instruct the *chargé d'affaires* of the United States, whom he has just appointed, (and who will shortly proceed upon his mission to the Republic of the Centre,) to investigate, with the greatest care, the facilities which the route through the province of Nicaragua offers, and to remit the information which he may acquire to the United States. Should it confirm the preference which it is believed that route possesses, it will then be necessary to consult Congress as to the nature and extent of the cooperation which shall be given towards the completion of the great work. The *chargé d'affaires* of the United States will be specially directed to assure your Government of the deep interest which is taken by that of the United States in the execution of an undertaking which is so highly calculated to diffuse an extensive influence on the affairs of mankind, and to express to it, also, the acknowledgments which are justly due to the friendly overture of which you have been the organ.

The result of these measures was the formal execution of a contract, on the sixteenth of June, 1826, between the Government of Central America and the agent of a projected association of American capitalists . . . the principal in the undertaking being Mr. Aaron H. Palmer of New York and the United States *Chargé d'affaires*, Colonel Williams, having been mainly instrumental in obtaining and negotiating the contract, the execution of which was officially witnessed and attested by him. . . .

Possessed of this instrument, Mr. Palmer's first step was to place the undertaking under the auspices of some of the most respectable names in New York, and for that purpose executed a deed of trust to De Witt Clinton, Stephen Van Rensselaer, C. D. Colden, Philip Hone, and Lynde Catlin, Esquires, by which they were constituted Commissioners to superintend the organization of the projected Central American and United States Atlantic and Pacific Canal Company, with a capital to be subscribed of five millions of dollars. . . This undertaking, which appeared to promise so fair, fell through. . . .

No better success was destined to attend the next attempt that was made, under still more promising auspices by a Dutch company, of which the sagacious merchant-king of Holland was the head and principal subscriber. . . . The contemplated provisions of this treaty were liberal and philanthropic. The canal was to be open to merchant vessels of all nations except those with which the Republic might be at war. . . . [and] means were to be taken to obtain from the several maritime nations of Europe and America the recognition of a perpetual universal neutrality within a certain distance in every direction from either entrance of the canal. . . .

Unfortunately, as well for the world at large as for the country locally interested itself, the intervention of the Belgian Revolution of 1830, with the hostilities that ensued between Belgium and Holland, and the state of agitation and uncertainty which continued in that country for several years after, distracted the attention of the intelligent monarch under whose auspices these preparatory steps had been taken, from this noble but distant and prospective enterprise. . . .

THE INTEREST OF SIMON BOLIVAR

The internal disturbances of the Republic of Colombia, more protracted and violent than afflicted its neighboring confederacy of Central America, precluded as early an attention being turned to this subject as we have seen was directed, almost in the first moments of its organized political existence, by the latter. . . . [A]t the period when Bolivar held supreme command in Colombia he manifested great zeal in obtaining accurate information in relation to it, and, in 1828 and 29, had a survey executed of the different routes . . .

We may here, by the way, introduce a personal anecdote of the Liberator, which has come to our knowledge, exhibiting the earnest interest that he felt in the accomplishment of this great undertaking. Had he lived, and continued at the head of the Republic of Colombia, the waters of the two oceans would probably long ere this have been mingled together. In the month of September, 1829, at Guayaquil, after he had brought to a victorious termination the war between Colombia and Peru, in a conversation with an American gentleman, on the subject of the communication across the Isthmus, he declared his intention, on his return to Bogota, and on the settlement of all the difficulties of the State, of sending his army to the Isthmus to employ them in this work a better use, alas, than any South American army has yet been put to. But the hand of disease and death was already upon him. In the following year his resignation of the Presidency (in consequence of the charges against him of monarchical aspirations, made the pretext by the Venezuelans for their contemplated division of the Republic) was shortly followed by his death, before he could embark for England, according to his intention, for the restoration of his shattered constitution. . . .

A CONTROVERSIAL AMERICAN "ENVOY"

The only remaining point in the history of the public action of the Government, in connection with this subject, is the special mission of investigation sent by the Government of the United States in 1835, of which the result proved, from the unfortunate selection of the agent employed, so very unsatisfactory in every point of view. The following is a copy of the resolution of the Senate of the third of March, 1835, to which allusion has been before made, and under the authority of which this special mission was sent:

Resolved, That the President of the United States be respectfully requested to consider the expediency of opening negotiations with the Governments of other nations, and particularly with the Governments of Central America and New Granada, for the purpose of effectually protecting, by suitable treaty stipulations with them, such individuals or companies as may undertake to open a communication between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, by the construction of a ship-canal across the Isthmus which connects North and South America; and of securing forever, by such stipulations, the free and equal right of navigating such canal to all nations, on the payment of such reasonable tolls as may be established, to compensate the capitalists who may engage in such undertaking and complete the work.

The gentleman selected for this interesting commission was one considered in all respects suitable for the discharge of its important duties, the late Colonel Charles Biddle . . . In accordance with the plain prescription of the above resolution, his instructions, which are dated May the first, 1835, marked out very distinctly the exact line of his duty. . .

Nothing could have been either more distinct or more complete and proper than these instructions, so that the State Department stands entirely acquitted from the blame of a failure, in so well planned a mission, consequent solely on a most flagrant violation of the whole spirit as well as letter of its instructions to the agent selected...chosen doubtless on the strength of his qualifications as displayed in better days. . . —unfortunately as the event proved—by the President. He was here unequivocally commissioned for the sole purpose of collecting information with emphatic instructions to obtain it in the fullest manner possible in relation to both routes, and both at the two respective localities, and at the capitals of the two respective Governments. . . .

Duly provided with letters to the U. S. Consuls . . . Colonel Biddle proceeded, by way of the islands of Cuba and Jamaica, directly to the Isthmus of Panama, which he reached on the twenty-seventh of November. Nor did he ever visit Central America at all, nor pay any other regard to that half of his commission relating to the northern or Nicaragua route, than cavalierly to reply, in general terms, to the inquiry addressed to him by Mr. Forsyth, on his return, for an explanation of this omission, that he had ascertained from the most authentic sources in Cuba, Jamaica, and New

Granada, that the project of a communication between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, by the San Juan river and Lake Nicaragua, was utterly impracticable. . . .

The fact is simply, that he went out purely for a purpose of speculation, using his public commission, most unrighteously, solely as a means for the furtherance of his personal views, and entirely disregarding all the duties it imposed, except in so far as they coincided with the objects of those private interests. . . .

On his journey across the Isthmus, up the river Chagres to the head of its navigation at the town of Cruces, and thence across to Panama, he had become perfectly satisfied of the facility with which can be secured, by steamboats and railroad cars, a safe conveyance from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean in six hours. He found the river navigable, at all seasons of the year, for steamboats drawing from five to six feet of water; and that as the current does not exceed three miles per hour, the trip could be performed from Chagres, at the mouth of the river of the same name, to Cruces (forty-three miles by the course of the river) in five hours; while from Cruces to Panama, a distance of only fifteen miles, the country presented no greater difficulties for a railroad than that from Washington to Baltimore

Confident in this most perfect conviction of the facility with which this enterprise could be accomplished . . . he reached Bogota on the thirteenth of March, after a fatiguing journey of fifty-four days. Here he lost no time in laying before the Government, through the medium of Mr. McAfee, an overture for the enterprise for which he was desirous of contracting. . . . He transmitted a note, offering a guarantee of a million of dollars for the performance of his proposed contract, which Mr. McAfee sustains by a declaration, that he, being instructed by his Government to render to Colonel Biddle every necessary aid, has no doubt of his ability and intention to carry this important work into complete operation, and that he can give to the Government of New Granada any additional security that may be required. . . .

A law was passed, in accordance with this recommendation, on the sixth of June; and under its provisions the privilege was finally granted, by an Executive decree dated June the twenty-second, to Colonel Biddle, in his own name and in behalf of his contemplated associates in the United States, and to the individuals composing the New Granadian company. . . .

Colonel Biddle's return to the United States in September was shortly after followed by his death, December the twenty-first—the announcement of which was the only satisfactory reply to the demand addressed to him by the State Department for explanation of his most extraordinary disregard of the main objects of his mission. . . .

We learn that since the death of Colonel Biddle an agent was sent to this country, by the parties who had associated themselves with him at Bogota, to inquire into the condition and prospects of his operations here, in the formation of his contemplated and promised Company. On ascertaining that all his magnificent representations of the pledges of support and cooperation by some of the leading capitalists of the country on the strength of which he had made his dazzling proffer of a million of dollars security were entirely destitute of foundation, the contract was transferred to a French house in the Island of Guadeloupe . . . by whom nothing of importance has been done, so far as we have been able to learn.

We cannot, however, repress a feeling of indignant regret, that a mission which had its origin in such grand and liberal national views, and the faithful performance of which could have laid a broad and secure foundation upon which we might, by this time, have probably witnessed this magnificent project already rising to successful achievement, should have been seized upon by the all-pervading all-demoralizing spirit of speculation so rife at that period in our country, to be perverted into a mere instrument of petty private interest.

We are desirous also, by casting the whole burden of the failure of this effort, the first attempted by the Government of the United States, upon the quarter where its responsibility justly belongs, to obviate the objection that might be derived by some, from this first failure, to a repetition of what we are well assured is the only proper initiatory step in the enterprise, namely, a more carefully selected special mission of investigation.

The *Chargé d'affaires* at Bogota, Mr. McAfee, by no means appears in the business as entirely exempt from just censure. . . . It is true that the New Granadian government was made sufficiently to understand that the Government of the United States had no connection with the private projects to the purposes of which their agent thus perverted a public function commissioned by his instruction for very different objects, and in a very different spirit.

But it is also true that from the outset Colonel Biddle approached the New Granadian government in a double capacity, incompatibly combined, of public functionary and private contractor; and that in introducing to that Government the propositions advanced by him in the latter capacity, the *Chargé* certainly gives to them at least the implied sanction and recommendation of his Government . . .

The *Chargé* could not have failed to be sensible of the flagrant departure by the special agent from the whole intent and spirit of his instructions, and ought not to have been induced to lend the aid of his own official position to a cooperation with such an abuse of an important public function for which the mere general recommendation of the latter to his good offices and civilities, alluded to above, in his letter of introduction, affords but a very slender apology.

Mortifying disappointment having again been the upshot of the business, the New Granadian Government and citizens appear certainly entitled to lay to the doors of our accredited public representatives a portion at least of its responsibility. And for our part, we confess that we feel disposed to visit with some severity, upon all concerned in it a responsibility which is rendered so grave by the consideration of the glorious objects and the incalculable interests compromised by it

We are happy, however, to be able to state that the attention of our Congress is still fixed upon it . . . that still cherished interest in it out of which are yet destined, we trust, to proceed more effective and successful measures towards that end.

Such, then, is a general outline of the past history of this great project—still a project, after the several abortive efforts, which, as the reader has seen, have been attempted to make it the great reality which it is still, we trust, one day destined to be. Each of the two governments locally interested in the two respective routes, has made two distinct attempts to carry it into execution. . . . Both are now mortified and disgusted with repeated disappointment, but neither despairing. The whole ground, it now appears, lies entirely open, and the opportunity eminently favorable for renewed action, if only it can be brought to bear upon the object with a degree of force and will at all proportionate to the magnitude of the undertaking, and to the immense value of its certain future results. . . . ■

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